

## **Committee of the Whole**

June 11, 2013

The Committee of the Whole of the Benton County Quorum Court met Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. in the Quorum Court Room, County Administration Building, Third Floor, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas.

14 JPs Present: McKenzie, Hernandez, J. Harrison, Allen, K. Harrison, Adams, Jones, Anglin, Blaty, Curry, Carr, Meyers, Moore, Moehring

1 Absent: Sandlin

Others Present: County Judge Bob Clinard, County Clerk Tena O'Brien, County Attorney George Spence, Administrator of General Services John Sudduth, Comptroller Sarah Daniels, Administrator of Public Services Marshal Watson, Election Commission Chairman John Brown

Media: Tom Sissom - Daily Record

Chair Kurt Moore called the meeting to order.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

JP Allen reported that the Finance Committee had met and discussed sales tax numbers and revenue, and that all of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) subsidy requests had been approved and forwarded for discussion tonight, except for NEBCO and Pea Ridge.

JP J. Harrison made motion to suspend the rules and read all ordinances and resolutions by title only, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

#### **A. Resolution Request: Authorizing the County Judge to Apply for an Illinois River Watershed Partnership-Rain Garden Project Grant**

JP J. Harrison stated this grant will be used to construct a Rain Garden next to the County Planning & Environmental Building and that the county will satisfy the 25% match with in-kind services.

JP J. Harrison made motion to approve and forward the proposed resolution to the June 27, Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Curry.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**B. Appropriation Ordinance Request: County Clerk - Elections, Voting Systems Grant, Dept 26, Fund 478**

JP Jones stated this is to appropriate \$10,365 received from the State of Arkansas to repair voting machines, and to purchase notebooks and other necessary equipment for use at early voting locations.

JP Jones made motion to approve and forward the proposed appropriation ordinance to the June 27, 2013 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**C. Appropriation Ordinance Request: Quorum Court, Dept. 18, Fund 010**

JP Curry made motion to approve and forward the proposed appropriation ordinance to the June 27, 2013 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**D. Discussion: To Provide Funding for the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Providers for Unincorporated Benton County in the 2014 Budget**

JP Allen stated this request for funding of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) was forwarded from the June 04, 2013 Finance Committee meeting and that each service provider's request was addressed and voted on individually. He stated that the Pea Ridge and NEBCO subsidy requests will be discussed at a later date.

JP Moore asked the court how they would like to proceed with the EMS discussion.

JP Carr stated that he objected to deciding the subsidy requests up or down, and made motion to vote on the subsidy request as a package, not individually, seconded by JP Meyers.

JP McKenzie stated that he would object to doing them all at once, and would like to talk about each one individually.

Further discussion was held on how the committee wished to vote on the subsidy requests individually.

JP Moehring stated that he would like to consider each one separately.

JP Moore called for the vote.

A show of hands vote was recorded as follows:

2 in favor:	Carr, Meyers
12 against:	McKenzie, Hernandez, J. Harrison, Allen, K. Harrison, Adams, Jones, Anglin, Blaty, Curry Moore, Moehring
1 absent:	Sandlin

Motion failed.

JP Allen stated that the 2014 Subsidy Requests from each provider will be discussed and voted on individually.

**a) Bella Vista EMS Subsidy Request - \$10,000**

JP Allen stated that Bella Vista has proposed a \$10,000 Subsidy Request for 2014 and made motion to approve and forward to the 2014 budget process, seconded by JP K. Harrison

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**b) Bentonville EMS Subsidy Request - \$60,000**

JP Allen stated that Bentonville has proposed a \$60,000 Subsidy Request for 2014 and made motion to approve and forward to the 2014 budget process, seconded by JP Jones.

JP Anglin asked if the subsidy requests were just for the year 2014.

JP Allen stated that this vote is strictly for the numbers proposed for 2014, and then during the budget process they will figure out whether they are going to take it out of revenue or get some other new revenue source.

JP Anglin stated that she would like some clarification on this vote and that we are absolutely satisfied with the discussion tonight. She added there are scenarios that we have never been presented information on, and they have not really pursued all of the options.

JP Allen stated that his perspective is to do the best that they can with taxpayer's money that not going into it blindly.

JP Anglin stated that going forward; she would like to know what the plan is for their method for the funding for EMS.

JP Moore recognized Administrator of Public Safety Marshal Watson.

Marshal Watson stated that the prevailing thought process is to get through this year and get something in place so that we are secure for 2014, and then do everything possible to insure the providers by January 1, 2014 that we have a long-term strategy in place.

After further discussion, JP Allen called for a vote that would support the motion made to approve and forward Bentonville's Subsidy Request to the 2014 budget process.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

JP Anglin made motion that as we move forward with future EMS discussion, that further discussion be done as the Committee of the Whole so that all members hear the same information, and not spend extra funds for committee meetings, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**c) Gravette EMS Subsidy Request - \$73,182.49**

JP Allen stated that Gravette has proposed a \$73,182.45 subsidy request and made motion to approve Gravette's subsidy request, seconded by JP Jones,

There being no discussion motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**d) Rogers EMS Subsidy Request - \$209,302.00**

JP Allen stated that Rogers's formula is not based on an expense/revenue budget; it is based more on the need for additional personnel and made motion to approve Roger's subsidy request, seconded by JP Carr.

There being no discussion, motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**e) Siloam Springs EMS Subsidy Request - \$1,000.00**

JP Allen stated that the Siloam Springs subsidy request was originally \$1,065 per call, but was reduced to \$1,000 per call, and made motion to approve and forward to the 2014 budget process, seconded by JP Jones.

JP Allen stated that after further discussions with some City of Siloam Springs officials, it is his understanding that revenue had not been taken out of their figures.

David Cameron, Siloam Springs City Administrator, said what he is looking for now is approval of the subsidy request number that they have provided. He said if the committee can come up with a solution and a number for all of the cities which the Quorum Court can agree to, between now and the county's budget season, and if that changes the City of Siloam Springs number to \$335,000, then they are not looking for a penny more than what we believe in our heart is right to represent our community, and will honor that number.

Lengthy discussion was held on the cost of Siloam Springs providing ambulance service to the southwestern part of Benton County.

JP Kevin Harrison stated that he would support a cost of \$855 per call base verses the \$1,065 that was requested.

JP Curry stated that voters expect us to be good stewards of the taxpayers' money, that the figures presented are too high, and that he would have to vote no.

Further lengthy discussion was held on the subsidy request provided by the City of Siloam Springs.

JP Carr stated that the committee feels that the numbers presented did not offset, and asked David Cameron if he would accept the \$855 per call so that they can move forward.

Further discussion was held on the cost of the subsidy request presented by Siloam Springs and accepting the \$855 per call offered.

JP Allen made motion to amend his motion to change the proposed offer from \$1,000 to \$855 per call number, second agreed.

JP Carr recognized Carol Smiley, a member of the City of Siloam Springs Board of Directors. Carol Smiley stated that she is representing the citizens of Siloam Springs, and that she stands by the numbers presented by the city's staff.

JP Anglin stated that she would support the \$1,000 for service; she wants the residents in the county to have EMS service.

JP Hernandez stated that he would support the \$855 per call.

JP Moehring stated that he would support the amended motion.

David Cameron stated that in good faith, he is going to take the \$855 proposal back to the Board of Directors, and that the city's acceptance will be contingent upon the county coming up with a formula sometime between now and the beginning of 2014 to determine the cost for 2015 and beyond. He added that we have got to move on with the business of our communities.

JP Kevin Harrison called for the vote.

JP Allen made motion to amend his motion to include that there will be a formula between now and 2014, second agreed

A show of hands vote was recorded as follows:

12 yeas:	Hernandez, J. Harrison, K. Harrison, Allen, Adams, Jones, Anglin, Blaty, Carr, Moore, Meyers, Moehring
2 nays:	McKenzie, Curry
1 absent:	Sandlin

Motion passed.

**f) Springdale Subsidy Request - \$68,774.37**

JP Allen made motion to accept Springdale's subsidy request for \$68,774.37, seconded by JP Jones.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

Meeting recessed.

Meeting reconvened.

**E. Discussion: Committee Reorganization Recommendations**

JP Moore stated that at the last Committee of the Whole, County Attorney George Spence was requested to make recommendations for the committee structure.

JP Moore stated that his recommendation is based on his experience on the court. He said that what he envisions is using the Committee of the Whole as a clearinghouse for all matters except financial, and then the committee could decide whether to tackle the business at hand, or if it is something that needs further development, and which could then be sent on to a committee. He stated from his past experience, he thinks that the Committee of the Whole could tackle the majority of issues. He stated that he feels uncomfortable in dissolving the committees until we find out how this recommendation is going to work.

Lengthy discussion was held on the proposed recommended changes presented to the current committee process structure.

County Attorney George Spence stated at this point the committee has not made any motions to change anything.

JP Jones requested County Attorney George Spence to prepare a document that would give the new JP's a list of the protocol currently followed by the Quorum Court. County Attorney George Spence stated he would prepare a document that describes the way the court functions now. He said they have been talking about routine matters and whether the court wants to change that, and if the committee unanimously agrees that a matter is routine, it can be forwarded directly to Quorum Court. He stated that they could give the chairman of the Committee of the Whole the ability to call a meeting of the Committee of the Whole for an item to be discussed by all members of the court. He stated that he would prepare a document of the Customs of the Benton County Quorum Court, and pass them out.

**f. Appropriation Ordinance Request: County Judge, Dept. 01, Fund 010**

JP Allen stated this appropriation ordinance request is to appropriate a donation received from Downtown Bentonville, Inc. for the Courthouse Feasibility Study, and made motion to approve and forward to the June 27, 2013 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Jones.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.